



## **Auxiliary Newsletter**

**13 May 2014**

### **Your Modern Award Update - Who Fights For You?**

#### **UFUQ Auxiliary award application & QFES application to dismiss our application**

We have reported to you over the past few months about your union's application, in December 2013, under the recently modified industrial relations laws for a modern award for auxiliary firefighters.

The battle to win you the respect of an award has intensified over the past 18 months.

In that time our attempts to obtain a charter of respect for all firefighters, a certified agreement, adjustments to the standing order, wage adjustments, a first award and then an interim award were all vigorously opposed by QFES.

QFES did not want you to have the respect of an award and continues to create obstacles and diversions. We know how angry you were when the government retrospectively legislated your first interim award out of existence as soon as you had won it in the Industrial Commission.

You will be aware that your union appeared at a parliamentary committee hearing, provided a written submission to the government and contacted every Queensland State MP and lobbied for the new laws to be altered because the laws would kill off your brand new award. We asked them to leave your award alone and let it be 'modernised' along with all other awards.

The government went ahead and killed off your first award with the QFES cheering them on.

While all other existing state awards are now being 'modernised' over a 2 year process, you are back to square one with no award to start with.

Your union has started all over again under the new laws to win you the respect of a first award.

QFES have applied to have your auxiliary award application 'struck out' and not even heard by the industrial commission.

On Monday 23 June 2014 a QIRC Full Bench will hear QFES arguments opposing your case being heard. Your union will argue that QFES have no basis to deny your industrial rights.

If QFES are successful in their 'strike out' application your union's new application will not proceed unless we successfully appeal the decision. If your union is successful in defeating QFES's 'strike out' application your case will be heard in September. We expect QFES to continue to oppose your right to the respect of your award in subsequent hearings.

QFES are persisting with their concerted campaign to deny you the respect of an industrial award and industrial representation.

We will keep you informed about the industrial commission hearings.

In the meantime we have once again written to the public service and asked them to confirm whether future arbitrated wage rises applying to full time firefighters will be passed on to auxiliaries. Once again we have not been given that ongoing guarantee.

You will be aware that QFES refused to honour your interim first award and refused to sign an MOU agreeing to 2 hour minimum starts and a flow on of arbitrated wage rises.

### **Charter of Respect**

You will recall that throughout 2012 and 2013 your union proposed to Commissioner Johnson of QFES, the Minister Mr. Dempsey MP and the Director General, Mr. Anderson that they all sign a charter of respect for all QFES paid employees, including all communication officers, and all firefighters, both full time and auxiliary, just as they had signed a charter for unpaid rural volunteers.

Despite numerous letters asking for meetings all three refused to sign a charter at that time. All three also ignored a petition signed by hundreds of employees asking them to sign the charter.

Although QFES and the Minister have now signed a charter in many ways similar to that proposed by your union in 2012, their document maintains an inference that auxiliaries are akin to 'volunteers' and are to be treated differently from the award covered workforce. The 2014 charter does not

cover QFES employees covered by an award.

The charter was not discussed with your union, is not endorsed by your union and is not signed by your union.

UFUQ auxiliary members contacted UFUQ and advised that, other than our efforts to win a charter over a year ago, members had not been informed about this 2014 charter and had not been given any opportunity to comment or endorse it either.

Members pointed out that QFES retreated from your union's efforts to win proper award respect for auxiliaries and tried to create a diversion with an overdue vague charter commitment to auxiliaries which separates them from the rest of the workforce who already have their own industrial awards.

QFES knows your union will not give up the fight even when QFES run to the government to undo our industrial tribunal wins, like when your first interim award was retrospectively killed off.

*You need to ask yourself:*

Why would QFES refuse to sign a charter covering your union and ALL QFES employees over a year ago?

What has changed in the meantime?

Why would QFES sign a charter on the one hand and fight tooth and nail against auxiliaries' rights with the other?

Why is QFES treating you differently to all other paid employees?

Why would QFES avoid your union?

What have QFES ever done for you?

Are the charter signatories going to be around forever?

Who fights for you?

### **Auxiliary representatives**

We, Alison Howearth and Jason Hall represent auxiliaries on the state committee of management and are your first point of contact for auxiliary matters.

You can contact us or the state office at any time to discuss membership, or any other matter affecting your employment. Your membership also provides you with many other advantages; please do not hesitate to ask about these.

Also, Anthony Cooke is the industrial officer who handles all employment related matters for auxiliaries, so if you have a work related question, you can contact him directly.

*Alison: 0401 445 885*

*Jason: 0403 767 575*

*Anthony: 0448 790 423*

Authorised by John Oliver State Secretary  
United Firefighters' Union of Australia, Union of  
Employees - QLD